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REPORT ON PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S SPEECH BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

17 Dec 63

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In a brief address to the United Nations General Assembly the new President of the United States attempted to make clear what his future foreign policy will be like. He pointed out that 30 years ago he was a collaborate of ROOSEVELT in a peaceful revolution in the United States, and said that he now seeks something similar for the entire world. His remark that no one particular political system will dominate the future of mankind may be taken as an expression of his willingness to accept peaceful coexistence. Every leader who strives for peace, he said, will find himself side by side with the United States. Mr. JOHNSON's speech, which took only 15 minutes, did not go into details, but in its main outlines left nothing to be desired so far as clarity is concerned.

The New York police took extensive precautions to insure the President's safety. The hall was carefully checked, and even the grounds outside the building were inspected closely. The President, who was accompanied by his wife and 11 members of the Congress, was welcomed by Secretary General U. THANT. It was the last day the General Assembly, and most of the delegates were about to return home, but the large hall was filled to capacity. All seats in the public gallery were occupied by special invitation.

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Mr. JOHNSON said that the late President had inspired humanity with fresh hope, which he shared with a new generation of world leaders. KENNEDY had addressed himself to the future, and wanted to forget the disunity of the past. The world should follow his example.

It is true that the world knows more about how to destroy itself than how to live together in understanding, but the United Nations has been too successful for one to despair of the future. President JOHNSON pointed to successes in the Congo and Middle East, to the slowing of the arms race, to the progress of decolonization, to the furthering of human rights. The United Nations should provide opportunities for constructive action and not become a platform for name-calling.

The President does not desire only bilateral assistance to underdeveloped countries, but lays great stress on collective international action. Just as he wishes to create the impression among Americans that he is liberal and progressive, so did he take this opportunity to convince the Assembly that he is deeply interested in the fight against illiteracy, poverty, and disease. Just as 30 years ago under ROOSEVELT he helped eliminate poverty in America, so does he now wish to contribute to the elimination of misery throughout the world.

Above all else, however, he sees his task as the maintenance of peace. Thanks to KENNEDY, the world has become a little safer and the road to the future a little easier. The greatest tribute one can pay to President KENNEDY is to continue his work for a peaceful future. On this note the new President ended his brief, reassuring speech.

((A)) Cable address of newspaper Grote Provinciële Dagblad.

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